

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O P 231815Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3582

INFO ARAB SUMMIT CONFERENCE PRIORITY 08

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

S E C R E T RABAT 5187

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR XF MO

SUBJECT: ARAB SUMMIT: MOROCCAN VIEWS ON PLO-JORDANIAN
RECONCILIATION

1. SUMMARY. FON MIN LARAKI, ROYAL CABINET DIRECTOR
BENSOUDA AND OTHER HIGH OFFICIALS CONTINUE TO COUNSEL US NOT
TO TAKE PALESTINIAN HARDLINE RHETORIC AT SUMMIT AT FACE
VALUE. THEY REMAIN HOPEFUL THAT PLO-JORDANIAN
RECONCILIATION CAN BE WORKED OUT, AND KING HASSAN HAS
SOME IDEAS FOR MOVING IT FORWARD. END SUMMARY

2. AT LUNCH GIVEN BY FOREIGN MINISTER LARAKI FOR ARAB
DELEGATIONS TO FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE, I HAD
OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR CURRENT VIEWS OF SEVERAL LEADING MOROCCAN
OFFICIALS ON PALESTINIAN QUESTION AT SUMMIT AND POSSIBILITIES
FOR PLO-JORDANIAN COMPROMISE. IN AN EXCHANGE WITH FON
MIN LARAKI, I NOTED TOUGH
TONE OF PALESTINIAN SPOKESMAN
QADUMI'S REMARKS AT OPENING SESSION OF FON MINS'
CONFERENCE OCT 22. LARAKI COMMENTED THAT PALESTINIAN
ONLY SAID WHAT HE HAD HAD TO SAY AND THAT WE SHOULD BEAR
IN MIND THAT IN ARAB WORLD WORDS DID NOT NECESSARILY RELATE
TO ACTION. FURTHERMORE, PALESTINIANS AT CONFERENCE WERE
NATURALLY AFRAID THEY MIGHT BE ACCUSED OF "TREASON" IF
THEY DID NOT TAKE TOUGH ENOUGH STAND. LARAKI'S VIEWS WERE
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ECHOED TO ME ALSO BY MFA SECRETARY OF STATE CHERKAOUI AND

INFORMATION MINISTRY SECRETARY GENERAL MAHJOUBI.

3. DIRECTOR OF ROYAL CABINET BENSOU DA, WHO KNOWS YASSER ARAFAT WELL AND WITH WHOM ARAFAT WILL BE STAYING AS HOUSE-GUEST DURING SUMMIT, SPOKE IN AUTHORITATIVE MANNER ON PALESTINIAN QUESTION. HE CONFIDED HIS OPINION THAT ARAFAT HAS ACCEPTED CONCEPT THAT ISRAEL WILL NOT DEAL WITH PLO DIRECTLY AND THAT THERE WOULD INSTEAD HAVE TO BE TWO OR THREE STATES ACTING AS INTERMEDIARIES BETWEEN PALESTINIANS AND ISRAEL. BENSOU DA ALSO STATED THAT KING HUSSEIN HAD NOW ACCEPTED PROBABILITY OF A CONTINUING FUTURE DIVISION BETWEEN EAST AND WEST BANKS OF JORDAN AND NO LONGER ENTERTAINED MUCH HOPE OF REGAINING WEST BANK. HOWEVER, BENSOU DA ADDED, HUSSEIN DESIRED TO CONTINUE TO PLAY NEGOTIATING ROLE. HE SAID JORDANIAN DELEGATION TO FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE WAS CURRENTLY PULSING LINE THAT DECISION NEEDED WHETHER JORDAN WAS TO HAVE CONTINUING MANDATE TO NEGOTIATE FOR RETURN OF WEST BANK OR NOT. EVEN ARAFAT, BENSOU DA UNDERLINED, DID NOT WANT JORDAN RELIEVED OF THIS NEGOTIATING MANDATE; IF JORDAN OPTED OUT, ARAFAT RECOGNIZED, THERE WOULD BE NO REPEAT NO NEGOTIATIONS.

4. BENSOU DA EXPRESSED OPINION THAT BEHIND CURRENT NOISY SPEECHES AT CONFERENCE A CERTAIN NEGOTIATING TERRAIN BETWEEN PLO AND JORDANIANS WAS BEGINNING TO EMERGE, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS STILL SOME DISTANCE TO GO. BENSOU DA FELT THAT AT THIS EARLY STAGE ATMOSPHERE WAS NOT BAD IN THIS REGARD.

5. BENSOU DA ALSO REITERATED VIEW PREVIOUSLY EXPRESSED TO ME THAT ARAFAT HAS APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING WITH REGARD TO US POSITION ON MIDDLE EAST. US SHOULD NOT BE DETERRED BY TALK EITHER IN PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SESSIONS OF SUMMIT PROCEEDINGS, BENSOU DA STRESSED.

6. KING HASSAN IS ALREADY PUSHING AND WILL PUSH HARDER LATER, ACCORDING TO BENSOU DA, FOR PLO-JORDANIAN RECONCILIATION. KING HAS IN MIND BRINGING IN THREE OR FOUR OTHER ARAB STATES TO HELP FACILITATE SUCH A RECONCILIATION. BENSOU DA EXPRESSED DESIRE TO REMAIN IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH ME

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DURING REMAINDER OF CONFERENCE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC ATTITUDES, SUMMIT MEETINGS, NEGOTIATIONS, PEACE PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: shawdg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974RABAT05187
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740302-0895
From: RABAT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741023/aaaaater.tel
Line Count: 109
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 AUG 2002 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <06 MAR 2003 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ARAB SUMMIT: MOROCCAN VIEWS ON PLO-JORDANIAN RECONCILIATION
TAGS: PFOR, XF, MO, PLO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005